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ABSTRACT

This paper examines theories of human development within the context of the models presented by the schools of cognitive learning, behavioralism, psychoanalysis, and humanistic views of growth. Stress is placed on the stages of human development that provides a means of better meeting the needs of students ages 10-14 in the middle school milieu. The basic premise of the middle school concept, especially with regard to appropriate curriculum, learning skills, teaching strategies, guidance, and the provision of learning experiences is based on the nature of the child. Teacher educators who believe in the middle school concept have advanced persistently an interrelated set of principles or key characteristics that experience has demonstrated most nearly meet the developmental needs of students in grades 6-8. The unique educational goals and learning environment required for this population are considered in light of information provided by human development theorists. All of the theories have their own strengths and weaknesses, their own possible application, within the organization of the middle school surroundings. Each suggests instructional and guidance processes most apt to enhance learning and adjustment during a period of particular turmoil and transition. Comparisons, contrasts, and criticisms are expressed on models established by such notables as Piaget, Erickson, Bruner, Maslow, Freud, and Rogers. When taken as a body of knowledge, each model affords a part of the entire panorama of human development and addresses the middle school teacher demonstrating the vast impact on middle school education. Contains 29 references. (Author/DK)

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A POSITION PAPER

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT THEORIES AND THEIR APPLICABILITY TO THE MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAM

SUBMITTED BY:

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1993

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ABSTRACT

The various theories of human development are examined within the context of the models presented by the schools of cognitive learning, behaviorialism, psychoanalysis, and humanistic views of growth. Stress is placed on the stages of human development which provides a means of better meeting the needs of students ages 10-14 in the middle school milieu. The unique educational goals and learning environment required for this population are considered in light of information provided by human development theorists. All of the theories have their own strengths and weaknesses, their own possible application, within the organization of the middle school surround. Each suggests instructional and guidance processes most apt to enhance learning and adjustment during a period of particular turmoil and transition. Comparisons, contrasts, and criticisms are expressed on models established by such notables as Piaget, Erickson, Bruner, Freud, and Rogers. When taken as a body of knowledge, each model affords a part of the entire panorama of human development, demonstrating the vast breadth which attaches to human development and its impact on middle school education.

Introduction. The basic premise of the middle school concept, especially with regard to appropriate curriculum/learning skills, teaching strategies/guidance, transition/articulation, and the provision of learning experiences/exploration, "is based totally on the nature of the child." Butler & Dickinson, 1987, p. 37). Teacher educators who believe in the middle school concept have persistently advanced an interrelated set of principles or key characteristics that experience has demonstrated most nearly meet the developmental needs of students in grades 6-8. In a recent survey (Cawelti, 1988), the middle school form of organization "is far more likely to meet the needs of the very young adolescent than any other format." (p. 1). Despite the superiorty of the middle school structure, all schools so labeled do not provide an "environment responsive to a group of students undergoing a tremendous number of developmental changes." (p. 11). Serious consideration of the educational, physical, psychological, and social ramifications surrounding students aged 10-14, emphasizes the necessity of consulting the literature of human development if middle schools are to be responsive to their unique clientele. Only through the exploration of the theoretical and conceptual knowledge base existent in human development studies will Ewing Middle School be able to serve our students effectively. Simply calling ourselves a "middle school" does not automatically ensure its appropriateness for facilitating the needs of 10-14 year olds. Differences between the real and the ideal

in terms of implementing practices that correspond to developmental models posed by our students must be examined with reference to the growth and change which occurs during this pivotal period. The events, experiences, and opportunities encountered by the young adolescent during this point in time must be perceived in the context of the development of transescents. This child is, according to Butler & Dickinson (p. 37), "the social and psychological foundation of all middle school curriculum, program plans, guidance, and learning."

Historical Background. The search for the most effective type of school for 10-14 year olds was born with the century. Significantly, it was during this period that the pioneers of psychology emerged, William James and Sigmund Freud among the most prominent. Certainly, the study of child development occupies a central place in psychology; through this medium insight was formulated on a crucial period in the development of the individual, the passage from childhood to later adolescence with adulthood just beyond. Thus, the 10-14 year old became a part of the concept designated as stages of development. The accepted fact that behavior develops in a series of identifiable and biologically determined steps is of critical importance in the rise of the middle school movement. For stage theories by Erickson, Piaget, as well as Freud himself, may be applied to all human activities, including those involved in emotional, cognitive, personality, and social development. As Erikson (1968) posited, during this tran-

sitional period, students begin the process of identity formation. The importance of the rise of the middle school concept then cannot be underestimated when it is remembered that for many years schools tended to ignore the student's social, emotional, and mental concerns, aspects clarified in the theories brought forth by Piaget.

Piaget, as explained by Penrose's interpretation (1979) was focused on the development of cognitive abilities, which is described as a series of stages, rather than as a continuous, unbroken progression. "Cognition develops as the child masters certain mental operations characteristic of each stage." (p. 21). As the middle school movement began to grow in the 1960's, such educators as Alexander & George (1981) were influenced by Piaget in such areas as "the need of education to help the child develop as a thinker...stimulation of the child to think...a child must be active, not passive, in the learning process...and the provision of experiences designed to help the child think" (Penrose, pp. 22-23). Alexander & George reflected Piaget's theories in setting out the facets which denote the exemplary middle school. For example, a variety of activities, teaching strategies, and learning experiences appropriate to the middle phase of schooling is mandatory. And students must master the learning skills demanded for the next stage of education.

Erickson also had an effect on the move toward middle schools and away from earlier junior high schools which grew rapidly in the 1920's and 1930's or a demarcation only between 8th grade and

high school entry, both of which structures persist at present... and enjoy their own proponents. Unlike Piaget, Erickson stresses the social development of the individual, utilizing eight areas of crisis in the course of human development. Two of these in particular have particular import for middle school formation: "industry versus inferiority," a phase extending from 6-11, thus encompassing our 10-11 year olds, and "identity versus role confusion," between the ages of 12-18 which comprises the older middle school student. The first of these, "industry versus inferiority," holds that if encouraged by teachers, students will develop a sense of industry and curiosity, seeking intellectual stimulation for themselves. "Identity versus role confusion" addresses the need of young adolescents to find their place in society. In developing a sense of ego identity, they must determine what they want from life, what they believe in and who they are. (Erickson, 1950). In each of these stages, the evolution of the raison d'etre for the growth of the middle school movement is evident. Alexander & George (pp. 16-21) include, for example, the need to offer middle school students a chance to explore in order to more fully develop interests and meet individual needs. And a guidance system assists students in determining academic, personal, and social matters even as they strive to establish identity.

Developmental Issues of Young Adolescents, the Theorists, and the Role of the Middle School. Physical development and social/emotional issues are of primary concern among students aged 10-14. It

is "the understanding and handling of these issues by significan adults (e.g., teachers) that brings about successful movement through the phase." (Wood & Hillman, 1992, p. 14). Thornburg & Aras (1986) discuss how keenly aware this age group is "of the changing nature of their bodies and the bodies of their peers." (pp. 49-50). Their physical appearance, sexual maturation, and behaviors related to these, are the primary changes noticed among middle schoolers. According to Thornburg & Aras, during early adolescence, many physical changes occur in a very short period of time. "Height and weight spurts occur accompanied by the appearance of secondary sex characteristics and the maturation of the reproductive system. On an average, "puberty for girls begins at 10.12 years of age and for boys at 12.76 years of age", (pp. 20-21), a period contained within the middle school years.

In writing of the "fit" between 10-14 year olds and the middle school setting, Cawelti has clearly taken cognizance of the need to address physical and sexual development in this milieu. Middle schools have responded in the last decade or so "by making specific provisions within the curriculum for dealing with issues of sexuality, peer relationships, and self-esteem." (p. 3). Lerner & Lerner (1977) underscore the importance of dealing with all aspects of physical development, correlating physical attractiveness and sexual "maturity" with the student's perception of self in "peer relationships, grade-point averages, and academic ability." (pp. 585-586).

Social/emotional development in middle school students is dramatic, intense, subject to wild and rapid mood swings, and out of proportion to reality. Schave & Schave (1989) detail the gradual move away from the family toward more independence and the peer group. The peer group not only confers a certain status to each member, but has influence, for better or worse, on the individual. Each year brings its own pattern of behavior, as detailed by Elkind (1971). For example, the 10 year old is perceived in terms of holding new doubts and tensions, "moody and sensitive with personal interests overwhelming." (p. 129). The 12 year old is "less self-centered and shows a need to define himself/herself." (p. 130). However, both the 10 and 12 year old is "difficult in school and has difficulty in sustaining interest in schoolwork" (p. 131). This finding, of course, poses challenges for our profession as middle school educators.

In confronting the problems posed by 10-14 year olds, the models presented by the theorists offer diverse ways of viewing students, educational goals, and learning environments. Although there is disagreement among the models, taken together, they afford a means of improving t educational experience for the students of Ewing Middle Scho he variety of concepts of development which spell out means of intervention in the stages and propose conditions and processes for movement through those steps hold implications for us as we seek to engage our students more fulling in the learning activity as well as guide their develop-

ment as human beings. One of the critical areas addressed by the stage theoriests and one on which our program at Ewing Middle School hinges is that of cognitive growth during the years 10-14.

The Stage Theorists and Cognitive Growth and Development in the Middle School Years. Flavel (1977) states that beginning about age 11, students develop formal operational thought, the most advanced stage of intellectual functioning. Reaching this stage of thinking manifests a major accomplishment in intellectual existence, for the advancement in thinking permits a distinct shift and a new way of viewing themselves and the world. Seifert & Hoffnung (1987) find that for the first time, youngsters can picture themselves in circumstances where they have no actual experience, they can apply hypothetical ideas feasibilities, and thereby find their horizons expanded in dramatic fashion. Schave & Schave (1989) note the developments in cognition are not without consequences. New cognitive possibilities bring imbalance in their wake. This disequilibrium is evidenced by a marked decline in the ability to tolerate, incorporate, and adapt to change. There is a softening of psychic structures and fragmented self-states. Further, the fast broadening of the young adolescent's world created by this cognitive growth, causes the youth to feel small and insignificant in the scheme of things. They fear losing their place in a vast and even frightening world. What have some of the theorists to say about cognitive development among this age group that might be of assistance as we aspire to excellence in our program here at Ewing Middle School? And do the

ideas pertaining to cognitive change have implications for the middle school movement as a whole?

Piaget's theories offer a base on which to understand cognition, of course, central to our role as educators. The theory may be briefly stated as follows:

1. Knowing is grounded in activity, physical and mental, an interrelationship between self and the environment.
2. Development occurs gradually and progressively resulting in a reorganization of mental structures used to make sense of the environment.
3. Learning occurs when the individual acts to resolve conflicts between held beliefs and new data which does not fit those beliefs.

Piaget then stresses the need of the individual to actively take part in bringing understanding to his/her world view. The primary goal of the learner is to make sense of the world around him/her. Humans are ever testing new ideas, using those ideas to understand new experiences, trying to fit new experiences into old ideas, and modifying those theories when forced to admit their failure to explain circumstances. (Piaget, 1954).

Piaget is not without his critics. Kingsley & Hall (1967, pp. 1122-1124) believe that mental development may not occur naturally and in a predetermined sequence in all children as stated by Piaget. Rather, they suggest "cognitive growth takes place through experience." Only because children must learn simple concepts be-

fore they can learn complex ones has the order of learning, for instance, concrete operations from ages 7-11 and formal operations from 11-15, appeared to be predetermined. "Because the acquisition of concepts takes time, one may have the incorrect impression that each learning stage unfolds at an undeviating age." (p. 1125). Regardless of criticism, Piaget's theory has been largely supported in research studies.

Applying Piaget to the situation found at Ewing Middle School revolves around such components as teaching strategies. Instruction that facilitates learning and motivates the student is obviously sequential in nature, building on prior knowledge and experiences. Strategy should highlight designing learning experiences which assist the reorganization of understanding, that stress discrepancies and then permit the student to plan and carry out a course of action that resolves the discrepancies. As teachers, we may set the conditions for discovery of the discrepancy and offer support for the student in his/her efforts to resolve it, but we must remember we cannot make the student learn. We should concentrate on helping learners generate information, general rules of organizaing, predicting, and planning, that can be utilized in attacking new problems. This means emphasizing inquiry teaching, cooperative learning, and independent study rather than direct teaching strategies which center on rote learning via teacher presentation, drill, recitation, and so on. (Cawelti, p. 8). Interestingly, it is the middle school arrangement that most consistently follows these

teaching/learning strategies, offering more evidence of the "fit" between this age group and the middle school arrangement.

In the utilization of the theories of Piaget, it must be considered that Piaget did little to apply his theories. Bruner, on the other hand, has applied the cognitive theory specifically to education, thereby having a direct and indirect impact on teaching/learning strategies and the curriculum itself. Bruner (1973) is influenced by Piaget, although there are differences and contrasts which deserve mention. Both see cognitive structures as changing qualitatively as a child develops. Both perceive the mind develping in a few major stages, with growth involving the movements from a state where the immediate and apparent absorb the child's attention to a state where his/her mind can think beyond appearances.

Bruner's (1965) three stages of development correspond quite well with Piaget's in the first three stages, but an unresolved contrast exists in the third, symbolic stage, where the child uses language to relate the real and abstract. Bruner holds that problem-solving skills are heavily reliant on language skills necessary for explanation. To Piaget, language skill is not the causative factor in reaching concrete operations. However, both Bruner and Piaget, together with other cognitive theorists, agree in rejecting mechanistic learning theory, that direct instructional procedure which the middle school movement strives to break away from, in order to more fully motivation to learn for its

own sake.

As noted above, Bruner's concepts are of particular import in the area of curriculum development. Educators strive to find answers to such questions as whether there is a body of knowledge and learning experiences specific to and appropriate for middle school students. As Cawelti (p. 11) points out, options for tailoring the curriculum of a school such as Ewing to match to population (minority, lower socio/economic status) are limited because of the "increase in requirements from the Tennessee state department of education. Since middle schools function as a "bridge" between elementary school and high school, we cannot set our curriculum without reference to these mandates. What is best in terms of human development may not be in line with our perceived role in the instructional chain. A criticism of educational leaders is the failure to articulate the curriculum needed by students from 10-14 to a degree not found in other stages of education. Perhaps, most critical for the middle-school teacher, the Piagetian model of learning stresses "hands-on," problem solving modes of instruction that gives many points of contact with experiences or knowledge familiar to the learner. This agreement is found in the goal of providing as many learning experiences as possible for our students; to do so, to widen the options, is a difficult mission in a time of budget constraints and cut-backs in art, for example, and other unique courses. In our move away from directed teaching to problem-solving approaches, we also approximate the theories introduced by Piaget.

The Theories of The Behaviorist Model of Human Development. From the early 1930's to the recent past, human development concepts revolved around the stress on external situations, overt behavior, and the environmental events governing that behavior. At present, this model is still of import and has impact on the middle school movement. In brief, the differences between the cognitive model and the behaviorist school of thought is that cognitive theory is concerned with the processes that underlie behavior---thinking, perception, sensation, imagery, among others, are not objectively provable but must be inferred by their effects. It looks at how the environment is interpreted by the individual. Behaviorism studies with the individual does and the observable variables that influence action; it emphasizes the history of the individual.

Ivan Pavlov and E. L. Thorndike were trailblazers in the formation of the behaviorist model. One of the more interesting and vital proponents of the theory is B. F. Skinner. Skinner (1971) holds that humans are reactive, responsive individuals, molded by the environment and the rewards found in that milieu. Further, man is mechanistic, set in motion by input (stimuli) and producing output (responses). This learning theory is also deterministic in its view of human beings. Everything in the individual's behavior is determined by the past or present environment in which he exists. Although such a perception of human development may appear bleak and narrow, it has been high-

ly productive in depicting fundamental learning processes.

One of the precepts employed in the learning theories merits some study by middle school instructors. Operant conditioning in which a response by the individual is reinforced when that response is the desired one has application in the classroom setting. An example is in the area of discipline. Strahan (1989) detailed ways in which disconnected and disruptive middle school aged students can be assisted in controling negative behavior. Positive reinforcement or rewards can strengthened desired behavior once it occurs. A "token economy has been designed in whcih students earn wages for their work, incentives are incorporated into daily routine through which activity time can be earned, and praise and recognition is given for successful assignment completion." (p. 5). The "shaping" techniques used by Skinner (1968) provides for behavior to be built incrementally as the student is rewarded for behavior that proximates the desired end. Starting with simple acts of proper classroom behavior and short term control, a more complex idea of positive conduct can be instilled.

However, learning theory is not simply a conditioning procedure. An extension of the concept is observational learning as applied by social learning theorists such as Bandura (1969). Much of what can be learned directly may be learned as well by watching others' behavior. Models are used to teach a myriad of desired behaviors, traits, or skills. Stromberg & Smith (1987) have stated that "the learning process at the middle

school level may be greatly enhanced through such simulation techniques endorsed by Bandura." (p. 9). Simulations are defined by Kindred (1978) as teaching techniques that use or create real life situations through games, role playing, or sociodramas." (p. 88). The method not only gains the attention and interest of students, but gives them an opportunity to identify with whatever is being studied.

A learning theorist who details a cumulative theory of learning predicated on both long-term development and short-term learning processes is Gagne. Gagne (1965) perceives learning as increasing by successive additions of several simpler ideas, according to the learner's skills, his memory of what he has already learned, and his ability to generalize and apply what he/she learns to other situations. Gagne's tenets are valuable in their application to middle school education, especially in relation to the idea of transfer. Teaching for transfer requires stressing the similarities between the current subject and the situations in which the new learning will transfer into subsequent circumstances. Transfer is more assured when basic concepts are fully mastered and when experience with a variety of similar problems are offered. Wood (1987) in speaking of the middle school surround, echoes Gagne when stating that "it is essential that the teacher provide adequately by building background knowledge, relating the new topic to the students' preexisting knowledge and setting purposes for the learning experience. " (p. 20).

Since the era of Pavlov, Russian models of human development have centered on learning theory. Vygotsky (1978) advances the thesis that patterns and levels of thinking are products of the activities found in the social institutions of the culture in which the individual grows up. Thus, the history of the society in which a child is reared and the child's experiences in that society, are of prime import in fashioning the ways the child will think. This concept meshes well with that of Skinner who also holds that environment shapes the individual. Vygotsky Stresses the place of language in development, seeing this as proceeding through four stages: Primitive or natural, from birth to age 2 and characterized by three nonintellectual speech functions; naive psychology, from about age 2-4, when words assume a symbolic function, vocabulary increases, and the circles of language and thought begin to merge. During stage three, the egocentric speech phase in the kindergarten period, is dominated by a running monologue and requires no responses from others. During the ingrowth stage, which lasts for the rest of life, the individual suses both inner speech and outer speech as instruments in conceptual or verbal thought. (Vygotsky, 1962, pp. 46-47). Vygotsky further arranged conceptual thought development in stages: stage I thinking in unorganized heaps in which things are placed in groups and perhaps labeled, on chance links in the child's perception; stage II with thinking in complexes in which individual objects are linked by not only subjective impressions but by actual bonds between the objects;

and stage III when thinking in concepts occurs. Synthesizing and analyzing have now converged. (Vygotsky, 1962, p. 67).

Vygotsky's influence as indicated by Luria, Davidof, and others has ramifications for American middle school educators. The early adolescent stage focuses on gaining skills in initiating kinds of communication needed for solving life's problems, in understanding other people's motives, and in consciously submitting to group norms. As noted by Hillman (1991, pp. 3-8), within the school environment, effective communications methods are available which will "enhance a sense of belonging, acceptance and ties to teachers and peers, and build self-esteem." It is up to us to utilize the findings of human language, perhaps following the percepts of Blumer (1969): human beings act toward things on the basis of the meanings those things have for them; these meanings are derived from social interactions one has with others; these meanings are modified through an interpretative process based on continuing action in and interaction with the social environment in which the individual lives and functions.

What criticisms might be found with the learning theories whose stress on providing measurable empirical data has produced many insights into how human develop? One of the most conspicuous deficits is the fact that the types of behavior not readily amenable to experimentation and measurement cannot be considered in the main. Learning theory tenets are best applied to very specific behaviors rather than over a broad spectrum of human development. Further, the theories do not usually account for

those individual differences we, as middle school educators, perceive among our students. There is an inherent difficulty as well with analyzing emotional experiences such as artistic creativity, vulnerability, defensiveness, and shame, among other areas of emotionality we find in our classrooms. Even broad complexes of behavior, for example, moral decision-making, are not defined in ways that are pertinent for the educator.

Psychoanalytic Theories of Human Development and Their Utility to Middle School Teachers. We have previously mentioned in passing the place of Freud in any discussion of stage theories of human development. The psychoanalytic tradition, in which Freud plays so major a role, is concerned with the individual's potential for dependence, aggression, and sexuality---those areas not usually investigated by the cognitive theorists who have stressed perceptual abilities, language, and complex thought. One is tempted to posit that the two theories taken together would form a "whole" picture of the development of the individual. In psychoanalytic concepts, the data is garnered primarily from case histories. Freud's notion of humans is a deterministic one, closely approximating that of learning theories, but emphasizing the power of innate drives which are for the most part beyond the control of the individual. Humans must then be ever striving to redirect the forces dwelling within him. These forces are present from earliest childhood, but are altered as man evolves different types of behavior. (Freud, 1947).

Believing that biological drives such as sex and aggression were the primary causations of behavior, Freud sees the development of personality taking place in several psychosexual stages. Oral, anal, and phallic stages are part of the pregenital period occurring before puberty. A period of sexual latency sets in around age 6. With the onset of puberty, the individual enters the genital period which centers on directed sexual activity, socialization, and selecting a life style. Of consequence for the middle school educator is the different rate of development within the Freudian definitions. Some of our students may be "mature," well advanced into the genital period. Others are yet in the latency stage. This results in great physical and emotional differences at a time when students dislike being different from their peers. Newman & Newman (1986) find that boys are more apt to be in the latency stage during middle school years than girls. Rates of maturation, according to Newman & Newman have different effects on boys and girls. Early maturation for girls puts them at greater risk as does late maturation for boys. Teachers must be aware of growth patterns in order to remain sensitive to student needs and the implications for educational processes.

Neo-Freudians such as Erickson have a more direct influence on education than Freud himself. Erickson's book Childhood and Society (1963) as well as other writings presents his model of the eight stages of man. While these bear much resemblance to those of Freud, Erickson stresses psychosocial forces. Also,

Erickson envisions the stages as points in the individual's life when abilities or experiences mandate he/she make a major alteration to his/her social environment and to himself. Social milieu is extremely important, affecting the way in which the individual copes with the necessary adjustments. In contrast with Freud, Erickson sees personality development as an ongoing process, not only in childhood, but throughout adulthood and into old age. Each of the eight stages postualted by Erickson are points where each person's adjustment tilts to one of two poles. Two of these stages are of special interest to middle school teachers.

At the higher end of the 6 to 11 period, the industry versus inferiority stage occurs. Industry is depicted as the child's interest in seeing how things work; inferiority details that his skills and abilities are inadequate or impossible. Students who are encouraged to do, to complete projects, to discover new interests, and establish friendships enjoy the productivity of this stage. For those who find no success, schoolwork, friendships, sports and hobbies may decline. At the lower end of ages 12-18, the middle school student, according to Erickson, will begin the task of sorting out his/her ego identity; this will continue during the entire course of adolescence. Failure to accomplish this task will result in role confusion. If he/she can emerge from this stage with a good self-image of who he is, a feeling of an integrated identity will result. The student will begin to resolve his own conflicts, and the social milieu is critical to development. (Erickson, 1968).

Transitions, as stipulated by Erickson, are difficult at any age. As noted by Eccles & Midgley (1989, pp. 140-147), during the years 10-14, and as supported by Erickson, the importance of industry and role identity hinges on a supportive environment, one that practices a match between the educational process and the developmental needs of the students. A mismatch between these goals is more likely when a traditional junior high school arrangement or a direct transfer to high school from an elementary school is standard procedure. The middle school, says Hillman, Wood, Becker & Altier (1990) is more apt to feature a smaller student body, support from teachers experienced with the age group, including learning styles which foster industry. Teachers in middle schools are more actively involved in improving their teaching strategies than counterparts in other type schools. Cawelti (p. 10), echoing Erickson, states that students aged 10-14 "should be provided with an extensive variety of options in both curricular and extracullicular activities in order to make informed decisions about their future." The middle school years are crucial in helping the early adolescent become a more self-reliant learner capable of "coping with a world of ambiguities and conflicting demands." Once again we are reminded of the close alliance between the stage theories in human development and the middle school.

The psychoanalytic theories have their real vitality in a holistic approach, looking to the whole individual, not excluding conscious and unconscious mental activities---in particular, the

emotional aspects of human personality development. The stress on the unconscious allows for exploration that other theories, for example, the cognitive tradition, do not. It is also noteworthy for the study of interpersonal relationships, between parent and child primarily, but useful as well in other facets including teacher student and peer friendships. However, it must not be ignored that most of the data is derived from case study material; it is usually impossible to verify or define from experiment. We as middle school educators, while deriving relevant information from pyschoanalytic theories of human development, cannot always rely on what is untested, vague, and reconstructed after the fact.

Humanistic Theories on Human Development: Their Place in the Middle School Years. Maslow (1968) calls humanistic theory the third force in psychology, for it negates both the determinism of the learning theorists and the Freudian emphasis on instinct. The theory, in common with psychoanalytic teachings, paints a holistic personality concept; it draws together learning theory and psychoanalytic precepts in maintaining that man is not bound by his instincts nor by his environment---he/she can make choices about life. More than any of the theories presented above, the humanistic approach is more hopeful about human nature. Severin (1974) believes that man experiences himself, as well as others, as spontaneously self-determining and creatively striving toward goals.

Vital to the humanistic school are the tenets of Maslow (1954). For the middle school teacher, a basic understanding of Maslow's beliefs in respect to motivation are of special noteworthiness. In

a unique category of stage development, Maslow proposes an interesting means of arranging human motives. *These motives form* a hierarchy rising from basic biological needs present at birth to more complex psychological motives that become primary only when the more basic needs have been met. The needs at one level must be at least partially satisfied before those on the next tier become the determinents of action. (Maslow, 1954).

Each of the levels set by Maslow have meaning for Ewing Middle School. Beginning with the most elemental needs for food and safety, we cannot deny many of our students come to school hungry and other physiological needs unaddressed. Nor are our students safe---many dwell in abusive home situations; communities are fraught with gang violence, drugs, and decay. Nor is our school a haven as we wish it to be. Many students do not feel they belong, whether in their homes, in the school, or in good peer relationships. Nor are their esteem needs often recognized; too often, we "write them off" as unteachable, as incompetent. They are not given the opportunity to gain approval and recognition, to taste even small successes. Their cognitive needs, to understand, to know, to explore are unrealized. Thus, it is not likely many of our students will reach the top of Maslow's hierarchy: motivated to fulfill aesthetic needs or to realize full potential via self-actualization needs.

Maslow's scheme is not supported by much data and it is difficult to measure. Nonetheless, it reaches to one of the integral

feature of middle school philosophy, the need for guidance services. The "home base" plan advocated by many leaders and in which each teacher is assigned a group of students who use the classroom as base, is in line with Maslow's theory. Teachers come to know the needs of each child; the plan reduces the sense of anonymity and isolation felt by students. The student is recognized and helped to feel competent. Humanistic theory, after all, stresses the importance of keeping in touch with real life; it has had considerable impact on adult counseling practices and should be capable of achieving the same with middle school-aged students in the guidance milieu.

Rogers (1961) also takes a humanistic stance toward human development; his model is concerned with positive personality growth and helping the individual reach his/her potential. One aspect of the model is the need to accept and like the client (student) as he/she is. An atmosphere must be created in which the student feels his/her own worth and significance. The counselor has to be open and honest in the relationship with the person he is guiding. Growth occurs as the student discusses difficulties and problems and then is encouraged to face up to them, finally bringing his own resources to bear in finding and applying solutions. Rogers then, holds that self-actualization is the primary source motivation humans. As the organism grows, it seeks to fulfill its potential. A person may not always know what actions will lead to positive growth, hence the need for guidance, but once he/she knows, growth will be chosen rather than

regression. The individual has the ability to change in a positive direction once he/she is aware of the choices. The need for positive regard is universal, according to Rogers. Everyone wants to be loved and appreciated. Although the regard received may be unconditional, it is more usually conditional, reliant on a specific behavior. The need for self-regard emerges at a later stage of development; basically it is an internalization of the behaviors and values that is approved of by others. (Rogers, 1970). The impact of Rogers on middle school guidance of students is evident. Students must be shown that choices for positive behavior and actions do exist. While we cannot condone deviant or disruptive conduct in the classroom, we can give, as pointed out by Harter (1988), the "support that enables them to see that significant others have regard for the self, which heightens one's feelings of self-worth." (p. 17). Recognizing that choices have consequences is an essential to be imparted, as is assisting the student to see themselves as able and valuable persons through the provision of positive experiences in the educational setting. Through this medium, positive regard and self-regard are fostered.

Humanistic views of development focus on the person's environment as he/she perceives it; these perceptions and interpretations of experiences determine behavior. However, no objective measurments exist of subjective experiences and perceptions. There is little solid proof of how the self-fulfilling, self-actualizing individual develops. Thus, many gaps appear in the concept, even as we accept many of the premises the theory expounds.

Conclusions. The primary reason for exploring contrasting theories of human development is to better understand behavior; the depicted concepts provide a basis for integrating data and to make comparisons among the ideas presented. As we have evidenced, learning theorists view humans as a product of his experiences; development is a cumulative increase in knowledge and behavioral capabilities. Cognitive theories focus on man as constructive and rational. For Piaget and other proponents, development of the mind is biological adaptation; learning occurs by active exploration and discovery. Psychoanalytic theory espouses a holistic view of the individual. Childhood experiences are important in development. Erickson merged Freud's psychosexual stages with developmental tasks. Humanistic ideas form a reaction against determinism of environment and innate drives. It is interested in building potential, in reaching self-actualization, and in perceiving the individual in control over his behavior, environment, and life.

Each of the theorists speaks to the middle school teacher. As supported in the literature in developmental psychology, these years mark a period of dramatic physical, social, and emotional change for students. It is our position that the middle school structure is a better match with early adolescent needs, as demonstrated via the theorists, than other types of educational settings for this age group. Whether in the area of teaching/learning strategies, curriculum/learning skills, guidance, transition, and other components of its features, the middle school is in debt to the theories put forth by the human development theorists.

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